CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Williams Bert and Debbie ROW
Proposed Implementation Date:	Winter/Spring 2014
Proponent:	Bert and Debbie Williams, Connie Hix, and Lisa Anderon
Location:	W1/2 Section 36 T8N R7E
County:	Meagher County
Trust:	Common Schools

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Bert and Debbie Williams, Connie Hix, and Lisa Anderon wish to obtain an easement to use and maintain an existing road (no name) across state land in section 20 T14N R4W. The easement would allow access to Section 25, owned by the proponent, and to a single family residence with outbuildings. The proposed easement would use ~5,793' of existing road, 30' in width totaling ~3.99 acres of state land.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

Proponent and lessee. The lessee is the proponent. An easement is in place for the proponent/lessee to access state land through another landowner, Scott and Lynn Jackson. Also, a Meagher County proclamation provides access through the remaining private land.

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

Contacting other agencies and obtaining permits is unnecessary.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

No Action Alternative- Do not proceed to issue the easement as proposed.

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Action Alternative- Proceed to issue the easement as proposed.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

Action Alternative- No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:
Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

Action Alternative- No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance..

No Action Alternative-None.

6. AIR QUALITY:
What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

Action Alternative- Minor increases in dust due to increased traffic on the road may occur. Minimal negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts may transpire; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:
What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

Action Alternative- No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:
Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

Action Alternative- Deer, elk, and other animals use the general area. Sage Grouse are known to inhabit lower elevations in the area. Roads in general can be detrimental to Sage Grouse habitat; however other roads with more use exist between the known Sage Grouse populations and this already existing road. No new reduction of sage brush or other vegetation will occur. No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:
Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

Action Alternative- Isolated populations of Sage Grouse are present in Meagher County including lower elevation locations near section 36. No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:
Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

Action Alternative- The DNRC has no record of cultural resources within the project's area of potential effect. The existing road for which this action applies is fully constructed and the ground within the road prism is fully disturbed. However, a professional inventory of cultural/paleontologic resources has not been conducted on undisturbed ground surfaces adjoining the area of potential effect. If a future undertaking is proposed outside of the requested easement corridor, then that proposed project will be evaluated to determine if a cultural/paleontological resources inventory is warranted.

No Action Alternative-None.

11. AESTHETICS:
Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

Action Alternative- No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:
Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

Action Alternative- No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:
List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

An Environment Assessment Checklist was completed in 1998 for the Reynolds Creek Timber Permit.
The Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy being drafted by the Greater Sage-grouse Habitat Conservation Advisory Council is in the final stages.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:
Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

Action Alternative- No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:
Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

Action Alternative- No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:
Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

Action Alternative- No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:
Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

Action Alternative- Minimal. No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:
Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

Action Alternative- No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:
List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

Action Alternative- No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:
Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

Action Alternative- Section 36 is not legally accessible; no change would occur.

No Action Alternative-None.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:
Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing.

Action Alternative- Access will be granted to one additional, primary residence. The area is sparsely populated. No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:
Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Action Alternative- No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:
How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

Action Alternative- No negative, detrimental or cumulative impacts are expected; no construction will occur on the existing road beyond normal service and maintenance.

No Action Alternative-None.

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:
Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

Action Alternative- Issuing the easement would provide some income to the trust, (~ 600.00/A at 3.99 acres = $ 2394.00); the easement will incur minimal impact and facilitate access for the proponent.

No Action Alternative- Not issuing the easement would result in no income to the trust and would not provide the proponent legal access to their primary residence.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:**	Andy Burgoyne	**Date:**	1/21/2014
	Title:	Helena Unit Manager		

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

The Action Alternative is selected.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

The application is for an easement on an existing road. No adverse impacts are anticipated.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

[ ]	EIS	[ ]	More Detailed EA	[x]	No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:**	Gavin Anderson		
	Title:	Forest & Lands Program Manager, CLO, DNRC		
Signature:			**Date**:	January 22, 2014